



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 10, 2005

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USDA Secretary Heeds Rep. Kind's Concerns on Reopening US-Canadian Border to Beef

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) welcomed Agriculture Secretary Johanns' decision to not reopen the U.S. - Canadian border to imports of Canadian beef from animals aged 30 months or older on March 7, 2005, as previously planned. On January 4, 2005 Kind called on then Agriculture Secretary Veneman to reconsider the agency's decision to ease the ban on Canadian beef, in light of newly confirmed cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease).

"In light of the recent discovery of new cases of BSE infected animals and new questions about compliance with the feed ban standards, I'm pleased Secretary Johanns has responded to the concerns that I, and other lawmakers, raised about fully re-opening U.S. borders to live beef imports," said Rep. Kind. "In my communications with the Secretary, I asked the USDA to base their decision to reopen the border on scientific information and with the protection of public and animal health as principle guiding factors. In his announcement yesterday, I was gratified to hear Sec. Johanns affirm his agency's commitment to these priorities."

Secretary Johanns stated the border would not be fully reopened because USDA has not completed their investigation into recent findings of BSE in Canada in animals over 30 months. With the exception of breeding cattle, the USDA officials have indicated they will allow the importation of live Canadian cattle intended for slaughter before the animal reaches 30 months of age. The USDA will also allow for the importation of frozen beef from animals slaughtered at less than 30 months of age.

Rep. Kind's January 4th letter to former Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman is available on his website at www.house.gov/kind/.